

STATE SENATOR • MICHAEL PRUSI • 38TH DISTRICT  
**Prusi Press Release**

P.O. Box 30036 • Lansing • Michigan • 48909-7536 • 517-373-7840 • Fax: 517-373-3932  
E-mail: [senmprusi@senate.michigan.gov](mailto:senmprusi@senate.michigan.gov) • [www.senate.state.mi.us/dem/SD38](http://www.senate.state.mi.us/dem/SD38)



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Contact: Sen. Mike Prusi 517-373-7840/866-305-2038  
Rep. Rich Brown 517-373-0850/888-663-4031

## **PRUSI AND BROWN ANNOUNCE REVISIONS TO NRC SUPPLEMENTAL FEEDING BAN**

**LANSING** – Senator Mike Prusi (D-Ishpeming) and Representative Rich Brown (D-Bessemer) today announced that the Natural Resources Commission (NRC) issued revisions to the current ban on supplemental deer feeding throughout Michigan at the Feb. 6 NRC meeting in Lansing.

Revisions include supplemental feeding in counties bordering the south shore of Lake Superior, including Ontonagon, Houghton, Keweenaw, Baraga, Alger, Luce, and portions of Marquette and Chippewa counties north of the T43N-T44N boundary line. Supplemental feeding will be allowed by permit from the Monday following January 1 and shall not extend beyond May 15. Permits will be issued by the Department of Natural Resources providing the feed is placed away from livestock, specific agricultural crops, and at least ¼ mile from paved public roads. Permittees are required to report to the Department on their feeding activities by May 30, 2004.

“I believe these revisions establish a fair compromise that protects our most vulnerable deer herds throughout the U.P. from extreme weather while maintaining safeguards against the spread of Chronic Wasting Disease and Bovine TB,” Prusi said.

Rep. Brown, who addressed the Commission on Thursday, said: “Winter weather conditions in the Upper Peninsula are significantly different from those that are experienced anywhere else in Michigan. Counties that border Lake Superior receive significantly larger amounts of snowfall even compared to counties in the southern Upper Peninsula. The yearly average snowfall in Keweenaw County exceeds 250 inches. When combined with the severity of this winter as indicated by the Winter Severity Index, the supplemental feeding ban has the potential to decimate the white-tailed deer population.”

On June 6, 2003, the NRC enacted a statewide ban on all supplemental feeding in an effort to combat the spread of Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) into Michigan. Numerous sportsmen and wildlife enthusiasts have expressed concern in recent weeks that the ban will effectively decimate herds throughout the U.P. where severe snowfall and below-average temperatures exist this winter.

“We want to sincerely thank our U.P. colleagues in the House; Sam Washington, Executive Director of the Michigan United Conservation Clubs; and the Natural Resources Commission, especially Commissioners Bob Garner and John Madigan, for their hard work in our efforts to pursue these revisions,” Brown and Prusi said. “We especially want to thank everyone in our districts who called, e-mailed, and wrote to share their concerns regarding the ban; and assure them we will continue to fight to ensure the voices of U.P. sportsmen are heard in Lansing.”

**Editor’s Note:** Audio comments (15 and 30 seconds) by Senator Prusi are available for download in an MP3-format at <http://www.senate.mi.gov/prusi/press.htm>